



Inclusion and Equality

Part 4: Evaluating educational provision for **bilingual learners**

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How **good** is our **school**?

Introduction

This document is one of a series of guides to self-evaluation which builds on the advice given in the publication *How good is our school?* (2002 edition).

This guide should be used to evaluate the quality of educational provision for bilingual learners, principally those who are learning English as an additional language (throughout the document the term “bilingual learners” is taken to mean learners for whom English is an additional language). The guide is designed for use by headteachers, senior managers, teachers, specialist English as an additional language (EAL) staff and education authority officers. It highlights effective ways in which schools can fully support bilingual learners. “Bilingual learners are pupils who function in more than one language in their daily lives. The term ‘bilingual’ emphasises that learners already have one language and that English is a second or additional language. The term does not imply an equal or specified level of fluency in two or more languages.”¹

Bilingual learners live throughout Scotland. They are not a homogeneous group. They differ from each other in many ways, including:

- The language(s) they speak at home²
- The number of other languages they speak
- Their cultural, religious, social and economic backgrounds
- Their previous educational experience
- Their level of proficiency in English and their home language(s)
- Their individual personalities, learning styles and other individual differences
- Other additional support needs they might have including, for example, potential for high achievement, general or specific learning difficulties, sensory impairment
- The level of support they have from their home and their community
- Their breadth of exposure to English language and Scottish culture

Sources of advice and legislation

A Curriculum for Excellence (2004)

A Curriculum for Excellence stresses that the curriculum should enable young people of Scotland to develop as:

- successful learners;
- confident individuals;
- responsible citizens; and
- effective contributors.

¹ Learning in 2(+) Languages (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2005).

² Throughout this publication the terms ‘home language’ and ‘first language’ are both used to indicate the language(s) other than English used by the child with his/her family. The home or first language is usually the vehicle through which pre-literacy skills are developed.

In implementing *A Curriculum for Excellence*, schools should build on pupils' learning and achievements, within and beyond school. Bilingual learners have a number of particular strengths including their experience of different languages. However, some will require additional support if they are to maximise their progress in school and achieve to their fullest potential.

Learning in 2(+) Languages (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2005)

This report identified the following key issues as important when working with bilingual learners.

Effective Teaching and Learning – this includes providing an appropriate learning environment, having high expectations, planning for bilingual learners, using appropriate strategies, monitoring and tracking attainment and achievement.

Communication with parents – this involves ensuring that parents are made welcome and that appropriate measures are taken to ensure their involvement.

Valuing and promoting home language – schools should show that they value learners' home languages and provide opportunities for learners to use and develop their home languages.

Staff support and development – staff need support in developing the expertise to support bilingual learners.

The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000

This Act places duties upon local authorities to ensure that schools meet the needs of all their pupils and encourage them to achieve their full potential, and raise educational standards.

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

This Act introduced a new framework to provide for children and young people who require some additional support with their learning. The definition of additional support provided in the Act is a wide one. Bilingual learners can be included if they require additional support to that which might normally be provided in a school to ensure that they make good progress in their learning. Schools have a key role to play in maximising the potential of bilingual learners. They should be proactive in addressing the learning needs, and raising the achievement, of bilingual learners. The Scottish Executive's *Code of Practice (2005)* provides helpful advice for schools and others on implementing the terms of the Act.

Evaluating educational provision for bilingual learners

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

This Act places a general duty on public authorities (including education authorities) to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity; and
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

Scottish Ministers impose *specific duties* on certain public authorities to help them meet the general duty. As part of this specific duty order, education authorities must publish a race equality policy setting out, among other things, how they will assess and monitor the impact of their policies on pupils of different racial groups, with particular reference to their attainment levels, but with reference also to more general aspects such as admissions, assessment, or the use of disciplinary measures against them.

Local education authorities and schools/other educational establishments are required to identify and tackle barriers to achievement including institutional racism. (**The Macpherson Report, 1999** defines institutional racism as: “the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people. It persists because of the failure of the organisation openly and adequately to recognise and address its existence and causes by policy, example and leadership”.)

National Priorities

Improving the educational outcomes for bilingual learners is an important issue within the five **National Priorities for Education**.

1. To raise standards of education for all in schools.	Schools and local authorities should have clear approaches to tackle underachievement and to ensure that all bilingual learners reach their full potential. The progress and attainment of all bilingual learners should be closely monitored.
2. To establish effective teaching and learning environments.	Schools should ensure that approaches to teaching and learning take full account of the linguistic strengths and needs of bilingual learners, in English and, where possible, in their home language.
3. To promote equality and help every learner benefit from education.	Schools should promote equality by ensuring that bilingual learners are given full access to the mainstream curriculum and are given the opportunity to learn alongside able and articulate speakers of English.
4. To work with others to teach learners respect and the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.	Staff, learners, parents and the community should work cooperatively to develop all areas and aspects of citizenship thus ensuring that bilingual learners can make valuable contributions to the community.
5. To equip learners with the skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society.	Schools should equip bilingual learners with the skills, strategies, attitudes and expectations necessary to enable them to learn independently through their home language and through English.

The role of self-evaluation

This self-evaluation guide will help you to evaluate your current practice and identify strengths and areas for further development. You can use the resources to identify ways of improving the quality of educational outcomes for bilingual learners.

The work pads in the guide have been prepared to assist you to assess current strengths and areas for improvement. A range of approaches and sources of information should be used to collect evidence. For example, first-hand evidence from questionnaires and interviews with key stakeholders will ensure that the views of stakeholders are collected thoroughly and systematically.

Self-evaluation in practice

This guide:

- asks key questions derived from themes within selected indicators from *How good is our school?*;
- looks at how evidence can be captured from more than one source in order to provide a robust basis for evaluations; and
- encourages you to reflect upon and weigh up the strengths and areas of improvement from observations in order to come to an overall evaluation of the quality of provision.

You can then use the evaluations and evidence to plan for improvement and to report on the standards and quality of what you have found.



The following provides a helpful basis for summarising the evidence considered for evaluating the relevant indicators from *How good is our school?*.

Note down the sources of evidence on which you are basing your evaluation in the boxes below.

People consulted:

Documentation and resources reviewed:

Direct observation undertaken:

Data analysed:

Evaluating educational provision for bilingual learners

Fill in your record of the strengths and areas for improvement for each of the quality indicators using the grids on the following pages.

In the box below, note the overall evaluation for each of the indicators.

Key question	QI from <i>How good is our school?</i>	Overall evaluation
To what extent are bilingual learners making very good progress and improving their levels of attainment?	2.1	
To what extent does the teaching and learning environment stimulate and motivate bilingual learners?	3.3	
How effectively do we meet bilingual learners' learning needs?	3.4	
How effective are our arrangements to assess bilingual learners' progress and achievement?	3.5	
How effectively does our school work in partnership with parents, professionals, key agencies and support workers?	4.8	
How successfully does our school consult with parents and take full account of their views and concerns?	5.4	
How effective is our school in ensuring all staff are confident and appropriately trained when working with bilingual learners?	6.6	

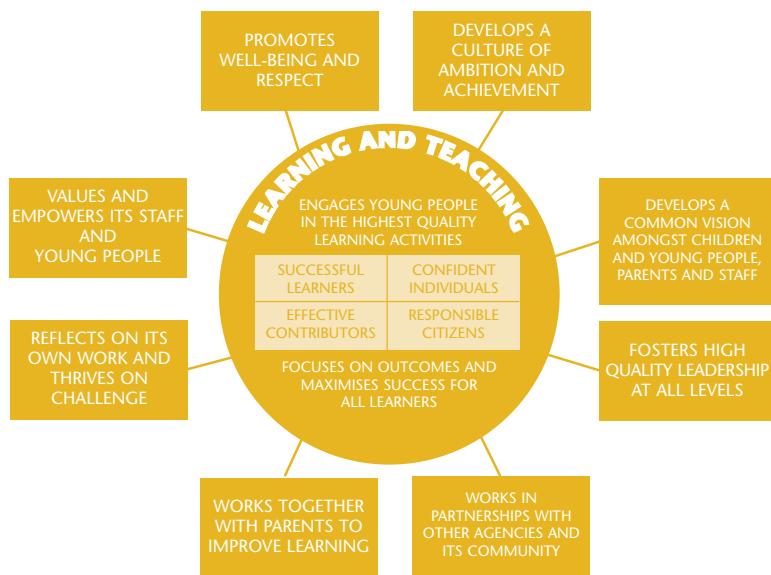
How good is our school?

The Journey to Excellence

Not all schools are at the same starting point with regard to self-evaluation. Some schools have a strong sense of their strengths and weaknesses and a track record for improvement. These schools are ready to aim for excellence.

In March 2006, HMIE published practical advice to those schools and pre-school centres which were ready to aim for excellence. This publication, *How good is our school?: The Journey to Excellence*, HMIE 2006, uses 10 dimensions which describe the features of an excellent school.

The 10 Dimensions of Excellence



You may find it helpful to explore the dimensions of excellence and the associated key features you improve your provision for bilingual learners.

Quality indicators and work pads

Introduction

The following pages focus on a selection of indicators and themes from *How good is our school?* This section consists of work pads for use to evaluate the quality of your provision for bilingual learners. Each activity highlights the key questions for you to ask, and provides space for you to record strengths and areas for development.

How good is our school?

Overall quality of attainment This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- The school's progress in raising attainment • Pupils' progress in learning • Pupils' attainment in relation to 5-14 levels and/or in national examinations
- Evaluations across other related quality indicators

Good practice	Key questions	Strengths	Areas for improvement	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers have good knowledge of bilingual learners' prior attainment from information passed on by previous teachers or schools, including where possible information from schools from another country translated into English. They use this information to assess needs and identify next steps in learning. 	<p>To what extent are our bilingual learners making very good progress from their prior levels of attainment?</p> <p>To what extent are our bilingual learners making very good progress in relation to national expectations?</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers are aware that there may be a developmental gap between pupils' understanding and their development of language skills in English. (There may be development gaps between skills in first language and skills in English and a gap between understanding and expression.) Staff support learners to transfer into English, those concepts and skills that they have developed in their first language. All teachers have appropriately high expectations of bilingual learners. This is reflected in the placement of pupils in classes, sets and groups. Learners are making steady progress in their coursework. 				

Overall quality of attainment (continued)

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence
		Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures are in place and resources are appropriately targeted to support raising attainment. Resources are focused on meeting identified pupil targets. For example, bilingual learners have access to their school's supported study sessions prior to national examinations. Focused EAL support teaches the skills required to help learners to progress from one level to another. Pupil support assistants carry out consolidation activities. The school monitors other aspects of learners' performance, e.g. attendance, level of involvement in the wider life of the school, subject uptake, exclusions. Teachers work with learners and families to secure necessary improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achievements are recognised and celebrated through a range of activities, including assemblies, displays, newsletters, open days. Bilingual learners have the same varied and frequent opportunities to share achievements and successes related to their languages and their cultural backgrounds as their peers. The school values bilingualism. The school encourages parents to work in partnership in promoting and developing their child's first language. Where staffing is available, teaching and support is provided to develop learners' first language. Information is provided about community language schools. 	<p>How successfully do we promote wider achievement among bilingual learners?</p> <p>How effectively do we show that we value bilingualism?</p>

Pupils' learning experiences This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- Extent to which the learning environment stimulates and motivates pupils • Pace of learning
- Personal responsibility for learning, independent thinking and active involvement in learning • Interaction with others

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learning environment is stimulating and challenging. Classrooms are well organised, with clearly understood routines in place. Classroom displays support language development and learning at all levels. Where appropriate, bilingual notices are used. • Teachers are aware that bilingual learners may have difficulty in accessing the curriculum because of factors in the learning environment. Appropriate steps are taken to overcome such barriers by modifying resources and teaching approaches, for example by using pictures or rephrasing ideas. • The curriculum reflects bilingual learners' interests, previous experiences, cultural and religious diversity and ambitions for the future. Staff avoid stereotyping. They ensure that learners have opportunities to broaden their understanding of the world and provide experiences outwith learners' immediate experiences. 	<p>To what extent does the learning environment in our school stimulate and motivate bilingual learners to learn? How flexibly does our school enable pupils to access the curriculum to overcome barriers to learning?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons provide appropriate cognitive challenge to bilingual learners. • The pace of lessons enables learners to make good progress in their learning. • Teachers share learning aims with learners and recap and consolidate at the end of lessons. • Teachers organise classroom activities to provide learners with opportunities for discussion to aid their learning. • Teachers make sure that they provide learners with appropriate amounts of 'thinking time'. 	<p>How effectively does the pace of learning support bilingual learners?</p>

Pupils' learning experiences (continued)

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners have opportunities to work collaboratively in a wide variety of groups. Groupings change to suit learners' needs and learning outcomes. Teachers provide opportunities for bilingual learners to work with fluent speakers of English who provide good models of English. Learners have opportunities to work with their peers on challenging tasks. This provides them with support for the language required to complete the task. Learners experience a wide range of learning approaches. For example, teachers organise activities which include talk, role play, individual study, visual material and practical tasks. Learners understand their own learning needs and develop the confidence to ask for help or clarification when they need it. Learners are encouraged to ask questions and express their needs in the classroom using their first language, for example, to communicate with other learners, parents or staff present who speak their language. 	<p>How effective is the school in promoting collaboration between bilingual learners and their peers?</p>	<p>How effective is our school in encouraging bilingual learners to become more active in their own learning?</p>		

Meeting pupils' needs This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- Choice of tasks, activities and resources • Provision for pupils with differing abilities and aptitudes • Identification of learning needs

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	
		Strengths	Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers organise tasks and use resources which positively represent all sections of society and challenge prejudice, injustice and racist views. Resources and displays reflect a multiracial society and encourage learners' self-esteem, cultural identity, aspirations and career choice in a non-stereotypical way. Resources are available in appropriate formats to enable learners to access the curriculum effectively. For example, dual language books, websites and bilingual dictionaries are available for learners who are literate in their home language. Where available, EAL and bilingual support staff are used effectively to support learning and offer specialist advice. Class/subject teachers are learners' first line of support. 	<p>How effectively do the resources in the school enable bilingual learners to access the curriculum?</p>		
	<p>How effectively do teachers in our school develop learners' language skills to enable them to access the full curriculum?</p> <p>How effectively do teachers in English and in their first language where possible. This talk provides opportunities to rehearse and use meaningful language in context. Teachers recognise the importance of talk in developing concepts and language. They provide opportunities for talk prior to reading and writing tasks.</p> <p>Teachers use a variety of methodologies suitable for bilingual learners. For example, they use key visuals, collaboration, scaffolding, paired reading, peer support, thinking time, mind maps, writing frames, and multilingual resources.</p> <p>Teachers use ICT to support language development and learning.</p> <p>They provide access to material in first language, as required to provide contextualised support for learning.</p>		

Meeting pupils' needs (continued)

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence
Areas for improvement		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An effective buddy/peer system supports newly enrolled bilingual learners coming into class and school. The buddy helps with orientation, explaining routines, providing friendship, support and integration. Where possible, the buddy shares the first language. Teachers use background information gathered at enrolment to identify areas where bilingual learners may require support. 	<p>What specific steps do we take to alleviate any potential barriers to learning due to different cultural and previous learning experiences?</p>	<p>Strengths</p> <p>How effectively do EAL and bilingual support staff provide support to bilingual learners?</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff have access to specialist advice and information pertaining to immigration issues to ensure that barriers to learning can be addressed. The school has created clear remits and roles for EAL and bilingual staff and all school staff are aware of them. A key member of school management has responsibility for overseeing the effective deployment of EAL and bilingual staff in liaison with EAL service managers where available. EAL and bilingual staff work collaboratively with class teachers to ensure that all bilingual learners' needs are met. 	<p>Areas for improvement</p>

Assessment as part of teaching This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- assessment methods and arrangements for recording • judgements made in the course of teaching • use of assessment information

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school gathers information on learners' language/literacy backgrounds from a variety of sources. These include families, previous teachers/school, departments, and EAL teachers. The school analyzes attainment data for bilingual learners and identifies notable features of performance and areas where support is needed. Teachers interpret and use attainment data for bilingual learners appropriately. For example, they track individual pupil progress, and compare learners' projected and actual performance. Teachers, learners and parents use assessment information to agree next steps and targets. Teachers take account of factors which may affect learners' performance in an assessment, e.g. length of time learning through English, the linguistic demands of the tasks. Teachers ensure that learners are provided with appropriate support to enable them to access formal assessments and understand the language and the context of the assessment. Learners have access to additional support with national examinations (bilingual dictionaries, extra time) where appropriate. Assessment arrangements take appropriate account of cultural and religious practices, for example, fasting. 	<p>How effective are our arrangements to assess bilingual learners' progress and achievement?</p> <p>How effectively does our school use assessment information to improve the learning of bilingual learners?</p> <p>To what extent do our school's assessment procedures provide support for bilingual learners?</p>		

Assessment as part of teaching (continued)

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers use a wide range of formative assessment strategies and modify aspects of their teaching to ensure that pupils learn well. Teachers engage in learning dialogues with pupils to provide them with feedback on their learning and to prepare them for further learning. Learners confidently use formative assessment strategies such as traffic lights, two stars and a wish, peer and self assessment. Teachers ensure that learners are aware of their next steps in learning. 	<p>How effectively do we ensure that assessment for learning is an integral part of classroom practice?</p> <p>How effective are the strategies we use to ensure that bilingual learners are aware of their progress and their next steps?</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has robust procedures in place for monitoring the English language development of bilingual learners, for example a language profile tracking progress in key aspects of English (reading, writing, talking, listening), assessment of the pupil's stage of English language acquisition. 	<p>How effective are our approaches to ensuring that learners develop skills in English language?</p>	

Links with local authority or other managing body, other schools, agencies and employers

This quality indicator is concerned with the range, purpose and effectiveness of:

- *links with the local authority or other managing body* • *links with other educational establishments*
- *links with voluntary organisations, the wider community and employers* • *links with statutory organisations*

Good practice	Key questions		Evidence
		Strengths	Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school follows national, local and education authority policies and procedures which address race equality, discrimination and bilingualism, including the monitoring of racist incidents within educational establishments. • The school is aware of, and makes use of, the full range of education authority support for bilingual learners. • The school works in partnership with a designated officer of the education authority, where appropriate, to review enrolment, attendance, attainment and achievement of bilingual learners. 	<p>How effective are our school's links with the education authority in supporting schools and ensuring continuity of approach for bilingual learners?</p>	<p>How effectively do we use our links with other agencies to address the needs of bilingual learners?</p> <p>The school works with other agencies and organisations which are involved in supporting the educational and pastoral needs of bilingual learners. These can include social work services, asylum support teams, the local health board, local college, community police, interpreting services, local religious communities, community language schools, agencies supporting minority ethnic communities, library services, school youth workers, careers officers.</p> <p>All services work well together to support bilingual learners within the school. Within the community, inter-agency liaison groups provide a forum for dialogue in promoting positive community relationships, defusing potential areas of conflict and developing policies to eliminate discriminatory practices.</p>	

Links with local authority or other managing body, other schools, agencies and employers (continued)

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	Strengths	Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-developed and effective links are in place to ease and support transition. This includes arrangements for access and transfer of essential information on bilingual learners, e.g. attendance, attainment, aspirations, language background, length of time learning through English. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act, 2004 makes clear the action that must be taken when pupils with additional support needs transfers from one school to another. Advice on this can be found in chapter five of <i>The Code of Practice, 2005</i>. The school is involved in sharing best practice within a network of educational establishments. Work experience placements take full account of the need to develop the abilities of bilingual learners. 	<p>How effective are our links with other educational establishments?</p>			

How good is our school?

Partnership with parents, the School Board³ and the community

This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- encouragement to parents to be involved in their child's learning and the life of the school • procedures for communicating with parents
- information given to parents about the work of the school • links between the school and the School Board • the school's role in the local community

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence
Strengths		Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is aware of the authority's arrangements for provision of interpreting and translation services. The school makes parents aware of how to request services, or, where appropriate, arranges this for them. • The school has accurate records of each parent's preferred language for oral and written communication. • Where parents request interpreting services, the school uses professional interpreting services where available. Services are used, as necessary and as requested, when communicating with parents to ensure confidentiality, accuracy and the maintenance of a professional relationship with parents. These can include, for example, face-to-face interpreters, telephone interpreting services, video links. 	<p>What steps do we take to ensure that there is effective communication with parents of bilingual learners?</p>	<p>How effective are we in encouraging parents' participation in their children's education?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are trained in the best practice in communicating with bilingual parents. • The ethos and culture of the school reflects the ethnic diversity of the school, local community and society. • All parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all aspects of school life. • The school encourages the involvement of parents of bilingual learners in all aspects of school life, e.g. attendance at parents' evenings, participation in school events, acting as parental helpers, taking part in parent bodies. • The school ensure that parents of bilingual learners are included in any sample groups of parents consulted for school self-evaluation. For example, EA reviews or HMIE inspections. 		

³ Under the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006, **Parent Councils** will replace School Boards as parental representative bodies.

Partnership with parents, the School Board and the community (continued)

Good practice	Key questions	Strengths	Evidence	Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where parents have come from a different education system, the school explains the Scottish education system, curriculum, methodology, pastoral care and the key role of parents working in partnership with schools. The school promotes parental awareness of their key role in supporting and developing the pupil's first language. The school provides support for parents to become involved in helping their children with homework. Where, appropriate, the school ensures involvement of the home-school link teacher. Parents are encouraged to contribute their bilingual and other skills in a variety of school and out of school activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school takes account of the cultural and religious diversity of its population when planning events. The school makes a strong contribution to the life of the community and takes steps to ensure that all parts of the community are included in what it does. The school takes steps to encourage and enable parents of bilingual learners to participate in decisions about the education of their children. The school routinely and proactively seeks the views of bilingual parents. Staff listen to and respond to parents' views. Local media are informed about and encouraged to celebrate the linguistic, cultural and religious diversity of the school. 			

Staff review and development This quality indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- links between staff review and development and school self-evaluation and planning • staff review procedures • staff development

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	
		Strengths	Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff have a clear understanding that they have a responsibility for bilingual learners even where there are additional specialist staff available. • In schools with a significant number of bilingual pupils, a key member of staff has responsibility for monitoring these learners' progress. • Where appropriate, the needs of bilingual learners are accounted for in the school improvement plan. • All new initiatives and developments take full account of the needs of bilingual learners, as appropriate. 	How effective is our school in ensuring that all staff are confident when working with bilingual learners?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are aware of and make use of the range of relevant continuous professional development opportunities provided by the EA and other bodies, e.g. postgraduate qualifications, in house training, professional reading, sharing of expertise within and between authorities, attendance at national conferences and events, work shadowing in other schools. • The school provides effective induction for newly appointed staff, including managers and probationers, on pastoral and educational issues relating to the needs of bilingual learners. • The impact of CPD activities is monitored and evaluated and informs future planning. 	How effectively do we ensure that appropriate staff development opportunities are available?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All EAL and bilingual support staff have access to professional review and development. • There are continuous professional development opportunities available which allow EAL and bilingual support staff to develop their specialist knowledge while keeping abreast of curricular and other professional developments. 	How effective are staff review procedures for additional specialist staff?		

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Member of
Plain English Campaign
committed to
clearer communication

